

Shin school is to go into the world and endeavor to raise its standards ever higher. Its doctrine of the uselessness of ascetic works is not, of course, meant to lower the standard of morality, since, with Protestantism, the Shin sect holds that good works are an invariable accompaniment of devout faith, and that the greater faith the more unfailing the morality.

JESUS IN THE KORAN.

BY BERNHARD PICK.

THE Koran, the sacred book, the Bible of the Mohammedans, is unquestionably one of the great books of the world, and has left its impress upon the ages. It claims to be the product of divine inspiration by the archangel Gabriel, who performed the function assigned to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. In the fifty-third Sura¹ the Koran is thus described:

"The Koran is no other than a revelation revealed to him:
One terrible in power [Gabriel, i. e., the strong one of God] taught
it him,
Endued with wisdom. With even balance stood he
In the highest part of the horizon:
Then came he nearer and approached,
And was at the distance of two bows, or even closer,—
And he revealed to his servant what he revealed."

Gibbon calls the Koran an "endless, incoherent rhapsody of fable and precept and declamation, which seldom excites a sentiment or idea, which sometimes crawls in the dust, and is sometimes lost in the clouds."² Carlyle calls the Koran "the confused ferment of a great rude human soul; rude, untutored, that cannot even read, but fervent, earnest, struggling vehemently to utter itself in words," and he speaks of its reading in English as "a toilsome task," adding, "Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Koran. We read it, as we might in the State-Paper Office unreadable masses of lumber, that we may get some glimpses of a remarkable man."³

Leaving aside the various estimates of the Koran as a literary production, we are concerned with the Christian elements which it

¹ Rodwell's translation, which is here followed throughout.

² *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chap. L.

³ "The Hero as Prophet," in *Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, London, 1840.

contains. For as Döllinger remarked, "Islam must be considered at bottom a Christian heresy, the bastard offspring of a Christian father and a Jewish mother, and is indeed more closely allied to Christianity than Manicheism, which is reckoned a Christian sect."⁴ For this reason I have here collected the *dissecta membra* in the Koran which treat of the founder of Christianity. Wherever possible reference has been made in the notes to Apocryphal literature and in the appendix will be found the Koranic notices on John the Baptist.

In fine I wish to state that the reader must not expect to find too much in the following pages, for the Christology of the Koran is a curious mixture of facts and Apocryphal fictions, of reverence for the man Jesus and denial of his divine character.

MARY.

"Remember when the wife of Imran⁵ said, 'O my Lord! I vow to Thee what is in my womb, for Thy special service.⁶ Accept it from me for Thou hearest, knowest.' And when she had given birth to it, she said, 'O my Lord! verily I have brought forth a female,'— God knew what she had brought forth; a male is not a female—'and I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Thy protection from Satan the stoned.'

"So with goodly acceptance did her Lord accept her, and with goodly growth did he make her grow; and Zacharias reared her. So oft as Zacharias went in to Mary at the sanctuary, he found her supplied with food.⁷ 'O Mary!' said he, 'whence hast thou this?' She said, 'It is from God; verily God supplieth whom He will, without reckoning!'"

Sura III, 31, 32.

⁴ *Lectures on the Reunion of Churches* (trans. by Oxenham, 1872), p. 7.

⁵ According to the Koran and Mohammedan tradition the parents of Mary are called Imran and Hannah or Anna.

⁶ Compare what we read in the Apocryphal Gospels. Thus in the *Prot-evangelium of James* (iv): "And Anna said 'As the Lord my God liveth, if I beget either male or female, I will bring it as a gift to the Lord my God and it shall minister to Him in holy things all the days of its life.'" In the *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary* (i): "They [the parents of Mary] vowed that, should the Lord happen to give them offspring, they would deliver it to the service of the Lord."

⁷ In the *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary* (vii) we read: "For daily was she visited by angels, daily did she enjoy a divine vision which preserved her from all evil and made her to abound in all good." In the *Protevangelium of James* (viii) we read: "And Mary was in the temple of the Lord, as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an angel." In the *History of the Nativity of Mary* (vi) we read: "Every day she ate only the food which the angel brought."

JESUS.

Annunciation of His Birth.

"And when the angels said, 'O Mary! verily hath God chosen thee and purified thee, and chosen thee above the women of the world.

"'O Mary! be devout toward thy Lord and prostrate thyself, and bow down with those who bow.'

"This is one of the announcements of things by thee unseen: To thee, O Muhammad, do we reveal it, for thou wast not with them when they cast lots with reeds,⁸ which of them should rear Mary; nor wast thou with them when they disputed together.

"When the angel said, 'O Mary! verily God announceth to thee the Word from Him; His name shall be, Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, illustrious in this world and in the next, and one of those who have near access to God;

"'And he shall speak to men when in the cradle and when grown up; and he shall be of the righteous.'

"She said, 'How, O my Lord! shall I have a son, when man hath not touched me?' He said, 'Thus: God createth what He will, when He hath decreed a thing then He only saith, Be, and it is.

"'And He will teach him the Book, and the Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel, and he shall be an apostle to the children of Israel.'"
Sura III, 37-43a.

"And make mention in the Book, of Mary, when she went apart from her family to a place eastward,

⁸ The reference here is to an event narrated in the Apocryphal Gospels, viz., *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary* (vii, viii); *Protevangelium of James* (viii-x); *History of the Nativity of Mary* (viii); *History of Joseph the Carpenter* (iii). The gist of the matter is this. When Mary was twelve (or fourteen) years of age, the high priest commanded all the virgins that were in the Temple to return to their homes and be married. But Mary refused, for she said that she had vowed virginity to the Lord. Thus the high priest was perplexed and he had recourse to God to inquire what he should do. Then a voice from the ark (or an angel) answered him; and they gathered together all the widowers in Israel (or all the marriageable men of the house of David), and desired them to bring each his rod. Among them came Joseph and brought his rod, but he hesitated to present it, because he was an old man and had children. Therefore the other rods were presented and no sign occurred. Then it was found that Joseph had not presented his rod; and behold, as soon as he had presented it, a dove came forth from the rod and flew upon the head of Joseph (or, a dove came from heaven and alighted on the rod). So Joseph, in spite of his reluctance, was compelled to betroth himself to Mary, and he returned to Bethlehem to make preparations for his marriage (or: he betook himself to his occupation of building houses), while Mary went back to her parents' home in Galilee.

"And took a veil (to shroud herself) from them. And we sent our spirit to her, and he appeared before her like a perfect man.

"She said, 'I fly for refuge from thee to the God of Mercy, if thou fearest Him!'

"He said, 'I am only a messenger of thy Lord, that I may bestow on thee a holy son.'

"She said, 'How shall I have a son, when man hath not touched me, and I am not unchaste.'

"He said, 'So shall it be. Thy Lord hath said, Easy is this with me; and we will assuredly make him a sign to mankind, and a mercy from us. For it is a thing decreed.'" Sura XIX, 16-21.

The Birth of Jesus.

"And she conceived him, and retired with him to a far-off place.

"And the throes came upon her at the trunk of a palm. She cried, 'O would that I had died ere this, and been a thing forgotten, forgotten quite!'

"And one cried to her from below her, 'Grieve not thou, thy Lord hath provided a streamlet at thy feet;

"'And shake the trunk of the palm-tree toward thee:⁹ it will drop fresh ripe dates ready gathered upon thee.

"'Eat then and drink, and be of cheerful eye, and shouldst thou see any of mankind,

"'Then say, Verily, I have vowed a fast unto the God of Mercy; to no one therefore will I speak this day.'

"Then came she with the babe to her people, bearing him. They said, 'O Mary! assuredly now hast thou done a strange thing!

"'O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a wicked man, nor unchaste thy mother.' And she made a sign to them, pointing toward the babe. They said: 'How shall we speak with him who is in the cradle, an infant?'

"It said, 'Verily, I am the servant of God, He hath given me the Book, and He hath made me a prophet.

"'And He hath made me blessed, wherever I may be, and hath enjoined me prayer and almsgiving, so long as I shall live;

"'And to be dutious to her that bare me; and He hath not made me proud, depraved.

⁹ In the *History of the Nativity of Mary* (xx) we read of a like incident which took place on the third day of the flight into Egypt.

“‘And the peace of God was on me the day I was born, and will be the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised to life.’

“This is Jesus, the son of Mary; this is a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt.

“It beseemeth not God to beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He decreeth a thing, He only saith to it, ‘Be,’ and it is.”

Sura XIX, 22-36.

“And we appointed the son of Mary, and his mother for a sign; and we prepared an abode for both in a lofty spot, secure, and watered with springs.”

Sura XXIII, 52.

Miracles of Jesus.

“[Jesus says:] ‘Now have I come to you with a sign from your Lord. Out of clay will I make for you, as it were, the figure of a bird; and I will breathe into it, and it shall become, by God’s permission, a bird.¹⁰ And I will heal the blind, and the leper; and by God’s permission will I quicken the dead,¹¹ and I will tell you what ye eat, and what ye store up in your houses! Truly in this will be a sign for you, if ye are believers.’” Sura III, 43b.

“When God shall say, ‘O Jesus! son of Mary! call to mind my favor upon thee and upon thy mother, when I strengthened thee with the Holy Spirit, that thou shouldst speak to men alike in the cradle¹² and when grown up:

“‘And when I taught thee the Scriptures and the Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel: and when thou didst fashion of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, by my permission, and didst breathe into it, and by my permission it became a bird; and thou didst heal the blind and the leper, by my permission; and when, by my permission, thou didst bring forth the dead; and when I withheld the children of Israel from thee, when thou hadst come to them with clear tokens; and such of them as believed not said, This is naught but plain sorcery.’¹³

¹⁰ This bird-story is narrated in the *Gospel of Thomas* (ii) and the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy* (xxxvi, xlvi).

¹¹ Instances of such quickening are found in the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy* (xliv) and the *Gospel of Thomas* (ix, x).

¹² That Jesus spoke in the cradle is also mentioned in the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy* (i).

¹³ Precisely the same expression is applied to Jesus in the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy* (xxxvi, at the end).

“And when I revealed unto the Apostles, Believe on me and on my Sent One, they said, We believe, and bear thou witness that we are Muslims.’

“Remember when the Apostles said, ‘O Jesus, son of Mary! is thy Lord able to send down a furnished *table* to us out of Heaven?’ He said, ‘Fear God if ye be believers.’

“They said, ‘We desire to eat therefrom, and to have our hearts assured, and to know that thou hast indeed spoken truth to us, and to become witness thereof.’

“Jesus, son of Mary, said, ‘O God, our Lord! send down a table to us out of Heaven, that it may become a recurring festival to us, to the first of us and to the last of us, and a sign from Thee; and do Thou nourish us, for Thou art the best of nourishers.’¹⁴

“God said, ‘Verily, I will cause it to descend unto you; but whoever among you after that shall disbelieve, I will surely chastise him with a chastisement, wherewith I will not chastise any other creature.’”

Sura V, 109-115.

Activity of Jesus, His Mission and His Testimony.

“And of old sent we Noah and Abraham, and on their seed conferred the gift of prophecy, and the Book; and some of them we guided aright; but many were evil-doers.

“Then we caused our apostles to follow in their footsteps, and we caused Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow them; and we gave him the Evangel, and we put into the hearts of those who followed him kindness and compassion; but as to the monastic life, they invented it themselves. The desire only of pleasing God did we prescribe to them, and this they observed not as it ought to have been observed; but to such of them as believed gave we their reward, though many of them were evil-doers.’” Sura LVII, 26, 27.

“And in the footsteps of the prophets caused we Jesus, the son of Mary, to follow, confirming the Law which was before him; and we gave him the Evangel with its guidance and light, confirmatory of the preceding Law; a guidance and warning to those who fear God.

“And that the people of the Evangel may judge according to what God hath sent down therein. And whoso will not judge by what God hath sent down, such then are the perverse.”

Sura V, 50, 51.

¹⁴ This is obviously a reference to the Eucharist.

"To Moses gave we the Book, and we caused apostles to succeed him; and to Jesus, son of Mary, gave we clear proofs of his mission and strengthened him by the Holy Spirit. So oft then as an apostle came to you with that which your souls desired not, did ye swell with pride, and treat a portion as impostors, and slay others?"

Sura II, 81.

"Some of the apostles we have endowed more highly than others: To some God hath spoken, and He hath raised others of them to the loftiest grade; and to Jesus the son of Mary we gave manifest proofs, and we strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. And if God had pleased, they who come after them would not have wrangled, after the clear proofs had reached them. But into disputes they fell; some of them believed, and some were unbelievers; yet if God had pleased, they would not have thus wrangled; but God doth what He will."

Sura II, 254.

"And remember when Jesus the son of Mary said, 'O children of Israel! of a truth I am God's apostle to you to confirm the Law which was given before me, and to announce an apostle that shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.'¹⁵ But when he (Ahmad) presented himself with clear proofs of his mission, they said, 'This is manifest sorcery.'"

Sura LXI, 6.

"[Jesus will say:] 'And I have come to attest the Law which was before me, and to allow you that which had been forbidden you; and I come to you with a sign from your Lord: fear God, then, and obey me; of a truth God is my Lord and your Lord: therefore worship Him. This is a right way.' And when Jesus perceived unbelief on their part, he said, 'Who will be my helpers in the cause of God?' the Apostles said, 'We will be God's helpers! We believe in God, and bear thou witness that we are Muslims.'"

Sura III, 44, 45.

"O ye who believe! be helpers of God; as said Jesus the son of Mary to his Apostles, 'Who will be my helpers in the cause of

¹⁵ A reference is here no doubt to the promise of the Holy Ghost "the other Paraclete" (John xvi. 7). This promise Mohammed applied to himself by a singular confusion of *Paracletos* with *Periclytos* (i. e., heard all around, famous) or *Ahmad* (i. e., the glorified, the illustrious), one of the prophet's names. The Moslems also refer some other passages of Scripture to Mohammed and his religion. Thus in Deut. xxxiii. 2 Sinai is said to mean the Jewish, Seir the Christian, and Paran the Mohammedan revelation. In Matt. xx. 1-16, the "morning" means Judaism, the "noon" Christianity, and "even" Islam.

God?' 'We,' said the Apostles, 'will be helpers of God.' And a part of the children of Israel believed, and a part believed not. But to those who believed gave we the upper hand over their foes, and soon did they prove victorious." Sura LXI, 14.

"And when Jesus came with manifest proofs, he said, 'Now am I come to you with wisdom, and to clear up to you a part of those things about which ye are at variance; fear ye God, therefore, and obey me:

"'Verily, God is my Lord and your Lord; wherefore worship ye Him: this is a right way.'" Sura XLIII, 63, 64.

"They surely are infidels who say, 'God is the Messiah, son of Mary'; for the Messiah said, 'O children of Israel! I worship God, my Lord and your Lord.' Verily, those who join other gods with God, God doth exclude from Paradise, and their abode shall be the Fire; and the wicked shall have no helpers.

"They surely are infidels who say, 'God is a third of three'; for there is no God but one God;¹⁶ and if they refrain not from what they say, a grievous chastisement shall assuredly befall such of them as believe not.

"Will they not, therefore, turn unto God, and ask pardon of Him? since God is Forgiving, Merciful!

"The Messiah, son of Mary, is but an apostle; other apostles have flourished before him; and his mother was a just person; they both ate food. Behold! how we make clear to them the signs! Then behold how they turn aside!" Sura V, 76-79.

"The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God, and His word which He conveyed into Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Himself. Believe therefore in God and His apostles, and say not, 'Three.' Forbear—it will be better for you. God is only one God! Far be it from His glory that he should have a son."¹⁷ Sura IV, 169.

¹⁶ Comp. also the next paragraph.

¹⁷ In rude misconception or wilful perversion, Mohammed seems to have understood by the Christian doctrine the Trinity of Father, Mary, and Jesus. The designation and worship of Mary as "the mother of God" may have occasioned this strange mistake. From Epiphanius (*Haer.*, 79) we know that there was in Arabia in the fourth century a sect of fanatical women called Collyridians, who rendered divine worship to Mary.

"And when God shall say, 'O Jesus, son of Mary, hast thou said unto mankind, Take me and my mother as two gods, beside God?' he shall say, 'Glory be unto Thee! It is not for me to say that which I know to be not the truth; had I said that, then verily Thou wouldst have known it. Thou knowest what is in me, but I know not what is in Thee; verily Thou knowest things unseen.

"I spake not to them aught but that which Thou didst bid me: Worship God, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of their actions while I stayed among them; but since Thou hast taken me to Thyself, Thou hast Thyself watched them, and Thou art witness of all things.

"If Thou punish them, they are verily Thy servants, and if Thou forgive them, then verily art Thou the Mighty, the Wise."

Sura V, 116-118.

The Death of Jesus.

"[The Jews said:] 'Verily we have slain the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, an apostle of God.' Yet they slew him not, and they crucified him not, but they had only his likeness (lit., *one was made to appear to them like [Jesus]*).¹⁸ And verily they who differed about him were in doubt concerning him. No sure knowledge had they about him, but followed only an opinion, and they did not really slay him, but God took him up to Himself. And God is Mighty, Wise.

"And there shall not be one of the people of the Book, but shall believe in him before his death, and in the day of resurrection, he will be a witness against them."

Sura IV, 156, 157.

"And the Jews plotted, and God plotted: but of those who plot is God the best.

"When God said, 'O Jesus! verily I will cause thee to die, and will take thee up to myself and deliver thee from those who believe not; and I will place those who follow thee above those who believe not, until the day of resurrection. Then, to me is your return, and wherein ye differ will I decide between you.

¹⁸ This absurd docetic idea is supposed to be the common belief of Christians, but is no doubt derived from Apocryphal sources. The Gnostic sect of Basilides supposed Simon of Cyrene (comp. Irenæus, *Adv. Hæc.*, I, 24, 4 [ed. Stieren, Leipsic, 1853, I, p. 244]; Epiphanius, *Hæc.*, 24, 3); the *Gospel of Barnabas* supposes that it was Judas the Betrayer; according to Leucius Charinus it was some unknown person who was crucified instead of Jesus (Photius, *Bibliotheca*, ed. Bekker, Berlin, 1824, I, p. 90); Mani (*Epist. Fund. ap. Evodium*) says that the Prince of Darkness was nailed to the cross, and wore the crown of thorns.

“‘And as to those who believe not, I will chastise them with a terrible chastisement in this world and in the next; and none shall they have to help them.’

“But as to those who believe, and do the things that are right, He will pay them their recompense. God loveth not the doers of evil.”
Sura III, 47-50.

The Koran knows neither a Resurrection nor an Ascension of Jesus.

APPENDIX.

John the Baptist.

“There did Zacharias call upon his Lord, ‘O my Lord!’ said he, ‘vouchsafe me from Thyself good descendants, for Thou art the hearer of prayer.’ Then did the angels call to him, as he stood praying in the sanctuary:¹⁹

“‘God announceth John (Yahia) to thee, who shall be a verifier of the Word from God, and a great one, chaste, and a prophet of the number of the just.’

“He said, ‘O my Lord! how shall I have a son, now that old age hath come upon me, and my wife is barren?’ He said, ‘Thus will God do His pleasure.’

“He said, ‘O Lord! give me a token.’ He said, ‘Thy token is that not for three days shalt thou speak to man but by signs; but remember thy Lord often, and praise him at even and at noon.”

Sura III, 33-36.

“A recital of thy Lord’s mercy to His servant Zachariah;

“When he called upon his Lord with secret calling,

“He said, ‘O Lord, verily my bones are weakened, and the hoar hairs glisten on my head,

“‘And never, Lord, have I prayed to Thee with ill success.

“‘But now I have fears for my kindred after me; and my wife is barren.

“‘Give me, then, a successor as Thy special gift, who shall be my heir and an heir of the family of Jacob; and make him, Lord, well pleasing to Thee!’

“‘O Zachariah! verily we announce to thee a son, his name John;

“‘That name we have given to none before him.’”²⁰

¹⁹ Comp. Luke i. 21.

²⁰ Comp. Luke i. 61.

"He said, 'O my Lord! how when my wife is barren shall I have a son, and when I have now reached old age, failing in my powers?'

"He said, 'So shall it be. Thy Lord hath said, Easy is this to me, for I created thee aforetime when thou wast nothing.'

"He said, 'Vouchsafe me, O my Lord! a sign.' He said, 'Thy sign shall be that for three nights, though sound in health, thou speakest not to man.'

"And he came forth from the sanctuary to his people, and made signs to them, as though he would say, 'Praise God at morn and even.'

"We said, 'O John! receive the Book with purpose of heart,' and we bestowed on him wisdom while yet a child;

"And mercifulness from ourself and purity; and pious was he, and duteous to his parents, and not proud, rebellious.

"And peace was on him the day he was born, and the day of his death, and shall be on the day when he shall be raised to life!"

Sura XIX, 1-15.

"And Zacharias, when he called upon his Lord saying, 'O my Lord, leave me not childless: but there is no better heir than Thyself';

"So we heard him, and gave him John, and we made his wife fit for child-bearing. Verily these vied in goodness, and called upon us with love and fear, and humbled themselves before us."

Sura XXI, 89, 90.

"And Zachariah, John, Jesus, and Elias, all were just persons."

Sura VI, 85.

MISCELLANEOUS.

AN EIGHTH-CENTURY ANGLIAN ACCOUNT OF PURGATORY AND HELL.

BY A. G. WITTING.

In connection with Roy Temple House's "Notes on the Medieval Conception of Purgatory" in the November issue of *The Open Court* it might be of interest to recall an early English description of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, a prototype to Dante's *Comedia*. It is found in Book V, Chapter XII, of *Historia Ecclesiastica* by Beda Venerabilis, written 731 A. D.

A Northumbrian, Drithelm, "died in the beginning of the night; but in the morning early he suddenly came to life again." During the night he was con-